GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS

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VOL. XXXV, NO. 15, JANUARY 21, 1957 . . . *To Know This World, Its Life*

☆ Washington, City of Presidents

☆ Democracy's Shrine

☆ Islands of Samoa

☆ Netherlanders Construct Their Nation

TO WASHINGTON'S WINTER CHARM is added this year the spectacle of Inauguration. Far from thronged parade routes, visitors gaze quietly at Jefferson Memorial

169

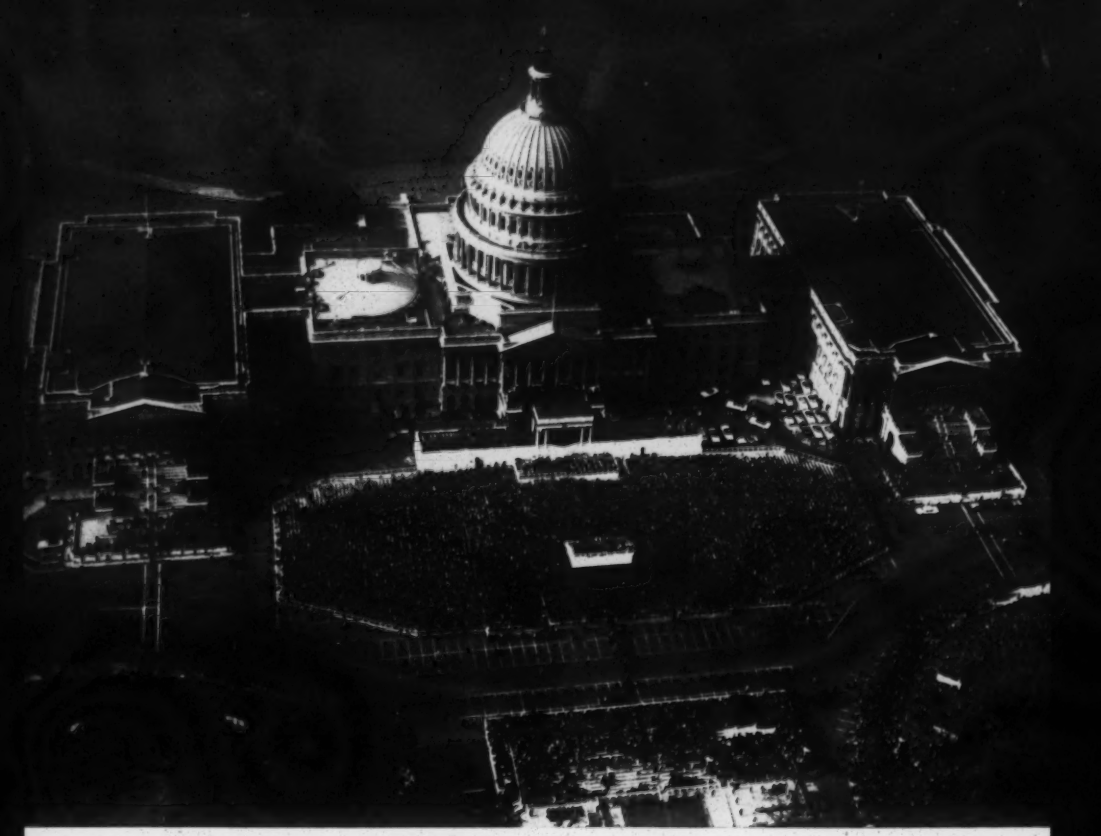
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER ROBERT F. SISSON

"The other position . . . answerable for a Presidential palace . . . majestic and agreeable . . . [with a] view down the Potomac . . ."

The view is still there, beyond the White House, Washington Monument, and Jefferson Memorial.

PHOTOS FROM WASHINGTON STAR

UMI



". . . sites assigned to the Congress House . . . claim already the suffrage of crowds . . ." Thus Pierre Charles L'Enfant, planner of Washington, described his scheme for the Capitol. Today's city follows his ideas closely, as the following pictures testify.

Washington *City of Presidents*

Thousands of eyes swing toward the east front of the Capitol. Necks crane. Silence falls on the throng. A President is to speak to the people before they parade him home. More than just sight-seeing thousands watch the nation's capital on this day. The attention of every country focuses upon it—on the President's address, on the pomp and glamour and crash of bands, on the breath-taking, monumental backdrop that the city of Washington provides.

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". . . all along side . . . may be placed [institutions] attractive to the learned . . ." One of them is the National Gallery of Art whose shallow dome seems to heighten the distant Capitol's.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER ROBERT F. SISSON

"The center of each Square will admit of Statues, Columns, Obelisks . . ." A snow-mantled, stone soldier, below, guards the statue of General Sherman, but seems to gaze at a distant obelisk, the Washington Monument.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER VOLKMAR WENTZEL

Washington's diagonal avenues, traffic circles, streets that end, then begin again may bewilder the visitor. The Capitol dome always tells him where lies the city's hub. No structure save one tops its 285 feet. Exception: 555-foot Washington Monument.

Spotlights turn both into nighttime beacons. Other buildings take on the witchery of illumination. Inside Lincoln Memorial, an elusive glow bathes the Emancipator as he gazes quietly on his city.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER J. BAYLOR ROBERTS

"There are a number of squares or areas . . . of which every Society whose object is national can be accomodated."

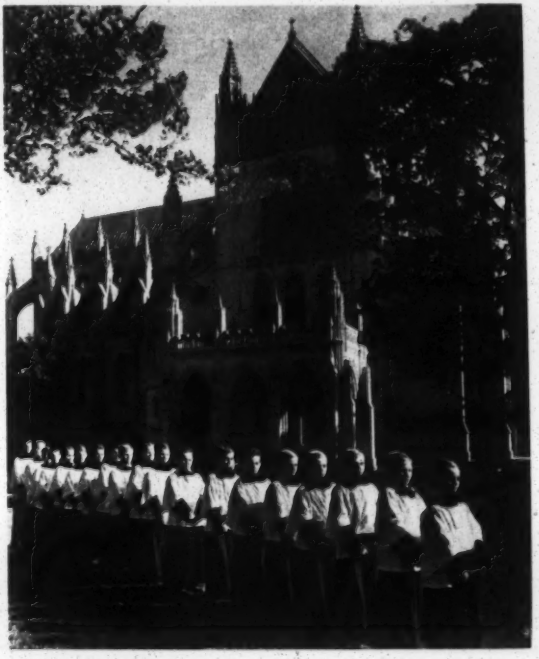
Though L'Enfant couldn't spell the last word, he neatly stated a reason for the location of the National Geographic Society's headquarters (left) in Washington.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER VOLKMAR WENTZEL

". . . the Federal City would soon grow of itself and spread as the branches of a tree do towards where they meet with most nourishment . . ."
"Nourishment" from Virginia pulses across Memorial Bridge.

To some who see Washington only for its parades, balls, blossoms, or on high school visits, it seems incredible that people can carry out a workaday business life in the midst of such soaring marble and granite monuments. Yet rush-hour traffic —buses, streetcars, automobiles—inches and honks past the White House as though no President lived there, past halls of justice and diplomacy, oblivious to decisions affecting all the world.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER B. ANTHONY STEWART



"[a] Church is intended for national purposes . . ." National Cathedral, still being built, takes pride in its Gothic architecture.

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

. . . Preamble to the Constitution

UMI

Democracy's Shrine

Thousands of Americans each year reverently file through the Corinthian pillars and mammoth bronze doors of the National Archives Building to see the documents on which our civilization stands. The Declaration of Independence, the American Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, yellowed with age, are preserved for all time in helium-filled showcases. Murals in the right-hand picture show (left) Thomas Jefferson presenting the Declaration of Independence to John Hancock, and (right) Madison submitting the Constitution to George Washington.

The statue of "Guardianship," left, flanks the portals.

PHOTOS BY NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER VOLKMAR WENTZEL

National Geographic References: ***Map***—Pocket Map of Central and Suburban Washington, D. C. (on paper, 50¢). ***Magazine***—Jan. 1957, "Pennsylvania Avenue, Route of Presidents," (school price 55¢); August, 1952, "U. S. Capitol, Citadel of Democracy" (75¢); April, 1940, "The Nation's Capital by Night" (out of print).

It's a good life on the smaller islands—leisurely and friendly under the warm sun. Samoa has little industry. Islanders export a few bananas, some cocoa, lots of dried coconut, or copra. Their own food comes mainly from the sea. Luckily there's plenty of Pacific to help feed Samoa's population, one of the fastest growing in the world.

Samoan islanders are among the purest representatives of a stalwart South Pacific race, the Polynesians. Many centuries before Columbus crossed the Atlantic, these remarkable navigators sailed the Pacific, settled most of the larger islands. Their sturdy ocean-going canoes could carry more than 100 men.

Today the descendants of the same people, paddling outriggers—distant

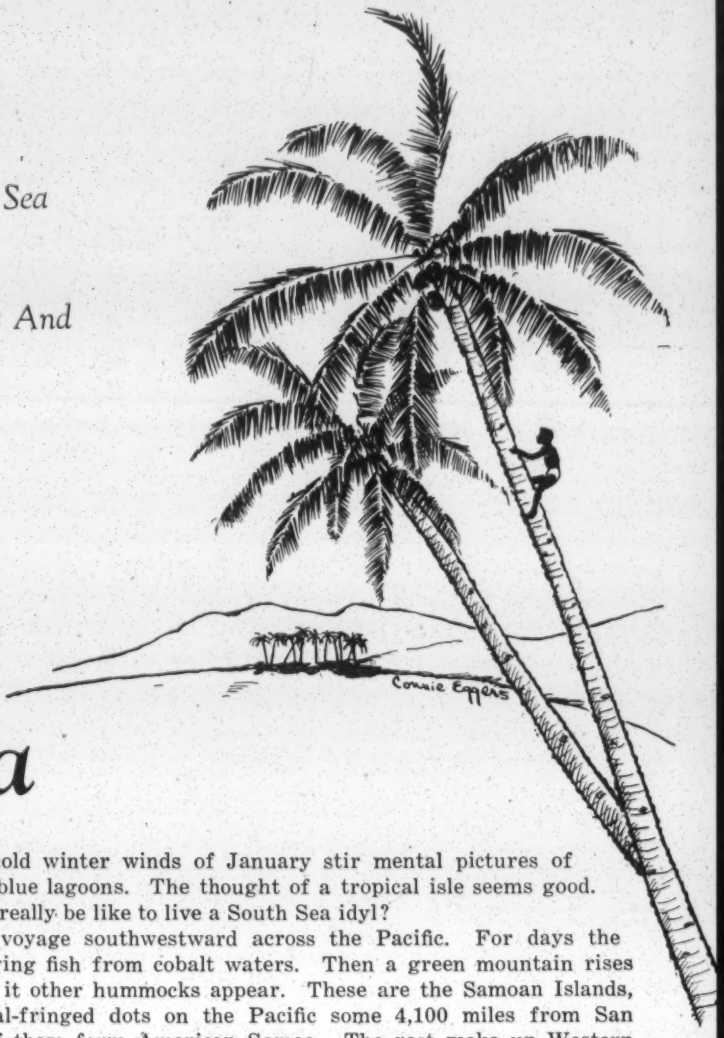
THREE LIONS

SAMOAN VILLAGERS seem happy beating out tapa, a tree bark, into paper-thin sheets

progeny of the old canoes—greet you if you manage to visit them on a copra schooner. A chief, or Matai, welcomes you ashore with elaborate ceremony. Members of the reception committee, each with a flower behind the right ear, present gifts: Samoan war clubs, baskets, shell necklaces. Visitors stay in the chief's "guest house." It has no walls, just pillars supporting a roof of coconut fiber. Large vases of brilliant flowers flank doorless front doors. The floor is coral, rather hard to sleep on, but only the Matai is permitted a bed. Beyond the clean, colorful village rise tangled mountains, core of the islands. Bananas are handy for a casual snack. But save room for dinner. It would be highly impolite to refuse the feast of roast dog, shark, grilled bats, and octopus.—J.A.

UMI

America's South Sea Outpost Mixes Ice-Cream Cones And Coconut Palms

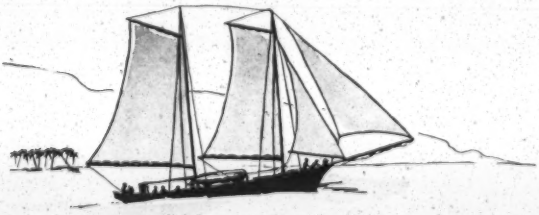


Samoa

DRAB skies and cold winter winds of January stir mental pictures of palm trees and blue lagoons. The thought of a tropical isle seems good. But what would it really be like to live a South Sea idyl?

Picture an ocean voyage southwestward across the Pacific. For days the ship's bow rouses flying fish from cobalt waters. Then a green mountain rises from the sea. Near it other hummocks appear. These are the Samoan Islands, a spattering of coral-fringed dots on the Pacific some 4,100 miles from San Francisco. Seven of them form American Samoa. The rest make up Western Samoa, a U.N. Trust Territory administered by New Zealand. On almost any of them it is possible to stretch out on white sand and sniff hibiscus flowers.

The government of American Samoa centers at Pago Pago (pronounced Pango Pango), hill-rimmed harbor town of Tutuila, the largest island. Formerly a U. S. naval base, Pago Pago has adopted theaters, ice-cream parlors, and running water. Many Samoans leave the smaller islands to revel in these exciting pleasures. Most soon return home, grateful for their simpler life.



K.L.M.

land, called a polder (above), adds to Dutch farm acreage. Heavy yields of grain spring from soft, rich soil, adding to food reserves and exports. Moreover, would-be farmers have new living room. Some work more than 100 acres—a big spread in Holland. New towns are mushrooming complete with civic centers, movie theaters, modern hotels, and farm exchange buildings, all still a little raw compared to neighboring villages, mellow with age. When the last polders are dry an entire new province, the 12th, with an eventual population of some 150,000, will be added to the Netherlands.

In early days, the Dutch used sand dunes as dikes, building up the sheltered land behind them. Now dike makers have a special technique. They make broad mats out of willow fagots (right), then sink them into position with heavy rocks. These serve to bind the sand. On such foundations the Dutch have erected vast walls against the sea (picture, page 178).

AP

But right now they face a more immediate project. When violent storms smashed dikes and flooded thousands

THREE LIONS

Netherlands—Nation Under Construction

HOLLAND means windmills and tulips and wooden shoes to most Americans. It means sleek dairy cattle and bicycles and steep-roofed houses to some. And to a few who know little of the Netherlands it means a small boy holding his finger to a dike. This last image is the least substantial, since the young hero never existed except in Mary Mapes Dodge's *Hans Brinker; or the Silver Skates.* Yet this fictional figure symbolizes the Netherlands' most constant problem and most realistic accomplishments.

The problem is geographical. Netherlands means lowlands—a flat section of coastal Europe little bigger than Maryland. Originally, it was much smaller. The North Sea lapped over about a third of the present area. For seven centuries the Dutch have checked the sea with dikes (above), drained marshes, rinsed salt out of soil, and tilled silt-covered fields well below sea level. Since World War II, Holland's population has boomed. With more than 10,000,000 people jamming the little kingdom the need for new land has led to new reclamation projects and accelerated work on the old.

Old maps of the Netherlands show a big inland sea, Zuider Zee, burrowing deep into the mid-section of the country. Modern maps reveal a remarkable shrinkage in Zuider Zee. A 20-mile-long dike across its mouth seals it off from salt water. Two massive slabs of land, one of 50,000 acres, the other of 119,000 acres, have grown out from its banks. A third chunk, bigger yet, is being reclaimed now. Two more are projected. Trapped, tamed, and drastically reduced in size, Zuider Zee has even changed its name to IJsel Meer (lake). Each piece of reclaimed

VICTOR MEEUSSEN

"CRACKING THE WHIP," Dutch girls glide across Volendam's frozen harbor. When ice locks fishing fleets in home ports, people of all ages emerge to greet it—on skates

of acres in 1953, the worst blow fell on the delta of the Rhine River, southwest of Rotterdam and The Hague. Here a series of estuaries cut deep into the coast. And it is here that a 25-year-project, a counterblast at the destructive sea, is just getting under way. The Dutch plan to seal off four of these twisting gulfs, plugging their mouths with huge new dikes. With a double stroke, such an engineering feat will both throw up a new barrier against the waves and also knock 270 miles off the Dutch coastline. The shorter the coastline, the easier it will be for the Dutch to man their battle stations.

Holland's endless warfare with the sea explains many of its widely-known, picturesque aspects. Windmills were built to pump out the water that seeps into low-lying fields. Most are replaced now by efficient mechanical pumps. Tulips thrive on below-sea-level acres and earn the Netherlands millions of dollars in exports. Bicycles are a handy, efficient form of transportation on reclaimed lands without hills. Even the legendary cleanliness of Dutch housewives originates in the country's battle with nature, for these bottom lands are inevitably marshy and only constant scrubbing keeps mud from tracking through farmhouses.

Over the centuries the stubborn nation has won its fight, gradually pushing back the waters and letting silt build new acres. But scientists are watching a geological shift that promises to make Holland's task even harder. As the Scandinavian countries are slowly rising from the sea, the Netherlands, almost imperceptibly, is sinking. Though the rate is only about six inches a century, the trend points to the need for higher dikes, greater vigilance. If any people can meet such a challenge it is the Dutch. As the old saying goes, "God made the earth, except Holland, which the Dutchmen made for themselves." They are still making it.—E.P.